



ASSEMBLYMEMBER
NICOLE PARRA
Representing the 30th Assembly District



Parra Notes

June 30, 2007

Hello Friends,

As many of you know, relevant state and federal water agencies took action a month ago to stop pumping at State Water Project (SWP) facilities in the Delta, including the Harvey O. Banks pumping plant, to provide maximum protection for Delta smelt. The State Water Project supplies water to 25 million Californians and 750,000 acres of farmland.

On June 10, the State Department of Water Resources (DWR) resumed limited pumping at its Harvey O. Banks Delta pump Sunday, to meet critical water supply needs. Then on June 17, DWR increased pumping at the Banks Delta pumping plant again.

The decision to halt pumping was one of the most critical actions taken by the state affecting the economic lifeblood of the Central Valley's agricultural industry. In the midst of this decision, I held a conference call with many water providers and agricultural interests from the Valley. I brought in a representative from DWR to answer questions and field inquiries from District participants.

The conversation was productive and DWR was able to hear first hand how the pumping actions have, and may, affect constituents in the Valley. It is absolutely critical that we ensure people and industry have access to sufficient and safe water supplies. I will continue to seek input from, and provide timely information and action to, my constituents in the 30th Assembly District.

For updated information on the Department of Water Resources and Delta pumps, visit:

www.water.ca.gov

What's Happening in Sacramento

The **Homeowner and Renter Assistance filing season begins July 2**. This is a program administered by the State Franchise Tax Board. The program filing period is between July 2 and October 15, 2007. File now to avoid delays! For further information, call **(800) 868-4171** or visit: www.ftb.ca.gov/individuals/hra/index.html

I am pleased to announce that the **California State Department of Housing and Community Development** awarded Emergency Housing and Assistance Program (EHAP) funds to **Kings Community Action Organization (KCAO)**. Based in Hanford, KCAO was awarded approximately \$55,000 to provide basic shelter assistance combined with services such as counseling, substance abuse treatment, and job training.

The **State Department of Housing and Community Development** has awarded a loan from the **Farmworker Housing Grant Program to Wasco Affordable Housing, Inc.** The loan funds in the amount of \$900,000 are for new construction of rental housing in the City of Wasco in Kern County.

I also want to congratulate **Maple Union School District in Shafter**. The **Department of Water Resources** recently announced that Maple is eligible for a \$400,000 construction grant to extend a water line from the City of Shafter to Maple School.

My Legislative Highlights

I co-authored a very important letter to both the Senate and Assembly Budget Conference Committees regarding insufficient funding to law enforcement. The letter outlined the need to protect funding for two critical public safety measures in our State Budget. The first item is the **Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction Grants (\$45 million)**. MIOCRG is a key strategy in reducing the reoccurrence of mentally ill inmates in our county jails and ultimately our state prisons. The second item is the protection of **\$36.6 million for Court Security**. Trial courts are dramatically understaffed and under funded and this proposal provides funding toward reaching the recommended state standards for court security. Both of these items are important to me, the 30th Assembly District, and to ensuring public safety.

AB 1255 successfully passed the Senate Public Employee Retirement (PER) Committee. I introduced the bill AB 1255 at the request of Fresno County and SEIU to provide the statutory authority for implementing the negotiated agreement reached these two parties for retirement benefits for newly hired general members.

As **Chair of the Assembly Agriculture Committee**, I have been working on a number of key bills important to our agriculture community. Recently, several passed out of the Senate Agriculture Committee. They include:

AB 472 (Assembly Committee on Agriculture). This bill is a follow-up to a bill heard by this committee last year, raising the statutory fees for several assessments to the current assessment levels. The purpose of raising these fees is to provide the program and industry more flexibility to fund the livestock and brand inspection program, and cover its costs or the program. The majority of these fees have not been increased since 1982 and the others not since 1992. There is no known opposition and is sponsored by the California Cattlemen's Association.

AB 856 (Parra). This bill allows the Secretary of the California Department of Food & Agriculture

(CDFA), upon the recommendation of the Seed Advisory Board, to **NOT** apportion a minimum subvention of \$100 to a county that does not have any registered seed labelers. This would be a six month trial. There is no known opposition and is sponsored by the California Seed Association.

AB 1718 (Assembly Committee on Agriculture). This bill makes technical and conforming changes to various agricultural advisory and promotional entities. It also incorporates an agreement made to this committee last year, by clarifying that violation of cattle inspection and identification laws constitute grounds to revoke a dairy exemption number. There is no opposition and this bill is supported by the agricultural industry.

AB 1735 (Assembly Committee on Agriculture). This bill makes numerous technical changes to conform California statute to federal milk regulations. California must comply with federal provisions in order to successfully market its milk, and ensure a safe milk product supply reaches the consumers. This bill restores the ability for the California Department of Food and Agriculture to take enforcement actions for dairy products that exceed allowable amounts of bacteria. There is no known opposition

Constituents Visit Sacramento

The **Western United Dairymen's California Dairy Leaders Class VI** came by to introduce themselves. The Leaders Program develops informed producers who will take leadership roles in the next generation of dairy organizations. I had the pleasure of meeting this year's participants, including folks from **Kern and Kings Counties**.

Valley Leadership Institute (VLI)

For the third consecutive year, I hosted the Valley Leadership Institute (VLI) for a three-day series of meetings and seminars for citizens in, and around, the 30th Assembly District. The 15 member class of VLI convened from June 26 through June 28 in Sacramento.

The purpose of the Valley Leadership Institute is to promote interest in the formation of public policy, to provide meaningful access to decision makers, and to help facilitate a working network of leaders in the 30th Assembly District. The VLI class learns about the democratic process, meets local government officials, and learns about key issues facing the Central Valley.

The Valley Leadership Institute brings together a number of community leaders who are positively impacting the Central Valley today and for years to come. This was our most outstanding year ever. I am extremely excited about the caliber of both the members of this year's class and the incredible speakers who participated.

The following community leaders comprised this year's class. In alphabetical order:

Paul Boyer, Community Development Specialist – Farmersville
Carla Calhoun, Resource Development Director – Visalia
Victor Castillo, Police Officer – Corcoran

Dameane Douglas, Community Activist – Hanford
Amanda Gaona, Social Worker – Bakersfield
Leslie Gardner, Executive Director – Visalia
Harry Gill, Insurance Agency Owner – Caruthers
Steven Godlin, Beekeeper – Visalia
Karen Goh, Executive Director – Bakersfield
Edward Herrera, Insurance Agency Owner – Bakersfield
Seanna Herring, Special Projects Officer – Fresno
Ryan Jacobsen, Executive Officer – Fresno
Randall Leach, Retired Police Officer – Hanford
Deborah Riordan, Health Policy Analyst – Clovis
Gene Tackett, Consultant – Bakersfield

Speakers included Secretary of State Debra Bowen, a Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor Schwarzenegger, Senator Negrete-McLeod, Assemblymembers Arambula, Bass, Berryhill, Garcia, Parra, Torrico, and Villines, and State Legislative Analyst Elizabeth Hill to name a few. Supporters of the event included Semptra Utilities, Renovo (Del Valle Homes), and Wells Fargo.

In the District

I had a terrific time at **Kern County's inaugural Mariachi Festival**, held at the Kern County Museum. This fun event was sponsored by **La Mina restaurants** and the Ruiz Family. I presented a certificate of recognition in honor of this first of its kind event.

SEIU visited the **Bakersfield** district office to discuss a number of health care items before the state legislature. I have met with SEIU leaders in the Capitol and in the district as health care legislation moves forward in both the Assembly and the Senate.

I enjoyed a busy and productive day in **Fresno County**. In separate meetings, I had the opportunity to sit down with **Fresno County Sheriff Margaret Mims** and **Dr. Edward Moreno, the Director of the County Department of Community Health**. With the hot summer months coming up, Fresno County reminds you to stay cool and stay hydrated!

Fresno City Councilman Blong Xiong and I had a chance to get caught up and compare notes between Fresno and Sacramento. Councilman Xiong was recently named by the Governor to the California Volunteers Commission, and I was pleased to offer my support for his appointment.

I also want to thank the fine employees at the **Sun-Maid plant in Kingsburg**. Not only is Sun-Maid a leading agricultural producer of such quality foods as raisins, apricots, almonds, and dry fruit, but they are also leaders in the food safety arena. As Chair of the Assembly Agriculture Committee, I enjoyed the tour of the facility and learning more about food process and handling.

Meeting Requests

If you or your organization would like to set up a time to meet with me or would like for me to attend an event you are sponsoring, please feel free to contact my **Executive Secretary Rozanne Jones** at (916) 319-2030 or by e-mail at Rozanne.Jones@asm.ca.gov

Interns Wanted

I am accepting applications for the internship program in my **Hanford, Bakersfield** and **Sacramento** offices. Candidates should be residents of the **30th Assembly District**, possess solid research and communication skills, and have a strong interest in public policy and political issues facing the **Central Valley**. Applications can be found by going to: <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a30>.

For Hanford office internships contact **Richard Valle** at (559) 585-7170 or by e-mail at: Richard.Valle@asm.ca.gov

For Bakersfield office internships contact **Nerissa Robinson** at (661) 334-3745 or by e-mail at: Nerissa.Robinson@asm.ca.gov

For Sacramento office internships contact **Brandon Sanders** at (916) 319-2030 or by e-mail at: Brandon.Sanders@asm.ca.gov

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